

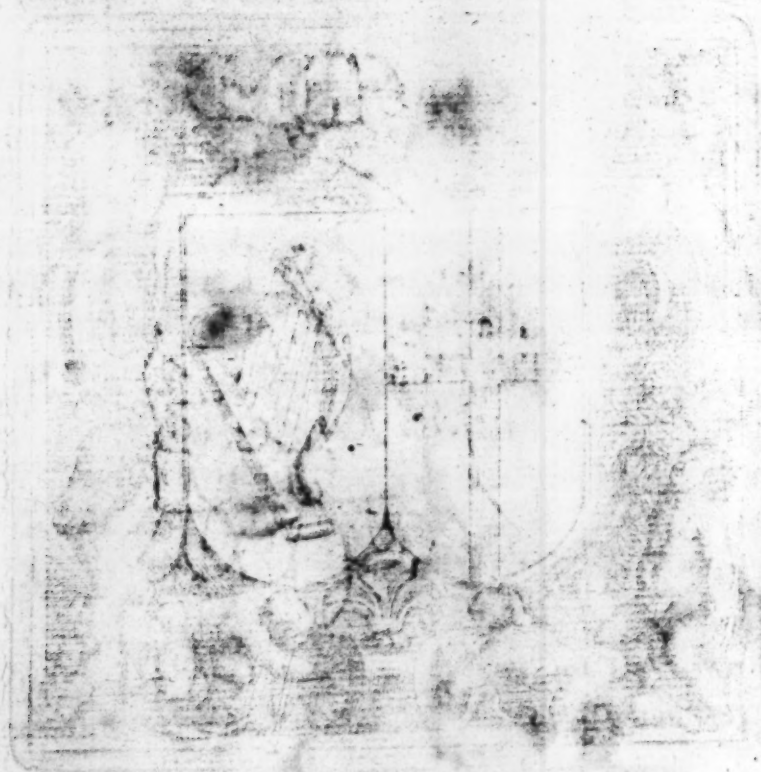
FREE  
PORTS,  
THE  
Nature and Necessitie of them  
STATED.

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LONDON,  
Printed by *William Du-Gard*, Printer to the Council of STATE; and are  
to bee sold by *Nicolas Bourn* in Cornhil, at the Corner Shop, at the  
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LONDON

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# FREE PORTS,

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STATED.



Upon this certain and clear ground, that some Countries can best spare their Commodities at some seasons of the year; and that other Countries have not at the same time alike urgencie or occasion for them, doth arise the wisdom of some Nations in fetching Commodities from the places of their Growth at that fit and seasonable time, and storing them up till the Necessitie of other Nations do call for them.

At which time, those Countries that have this Necessitie, beeing furnished from those Magazines or Stores, both the Shipping of the said Countries are by this means prevented of their employment, and the Price, as much as the Market will bear, is raised upon them.

As

*First*, all Countries, whose commodities are Annual, such as are VVines, Fruits, Grain, Fish, Oils, Tobacco, Sugars, Galls, Cottons, Silks, Indico, and many other Drugs, as many of the Commodities of Spain, France, most part of the Commodities of the East and VVest Indies;



*Indies, Canaries, Streights, &c.* All these have their Seasons, and Harvest for those Commodities, at which time, they are most cheap, and easiest to be had.

*Secondly*, All Countries who are subject to Mounsons, or Trade-windes, to extremities of seasons for heat or cold, or to deluges of Rain, among which wee may reckon many Ports of the *East-Indies*, many of *Guiny*, and *Africa*, som Coasts on the *West-Indies*, with all the more Northerly Regions of *Greenland*, *Russia*, *Poland*, *Norway*, *Sweden*, *Denmark*, *Prussia*, &c. all those do likewise oblige a Commerce to them, at som times of the Year onely.

Countries therefore, who have no immediate Traffique with these places named, or that do neglect the going thither with ships of their own, at those fit Seasons; As such Countries as are either not well seated for Trade to those Parts, or as have not Convenient Ports, and number of Shipping to manage the Trade; or who are not expert in matters of Traffique, and Navigation; or such as are at feud or war with those other Nations; All these Countries, it is certain, when they stand in need of the Commodities of any of the aforesaid places, must bee beholding to the said Stores, or Magazines for them; and must bee content to abide the Prices or Rates set upon them.

Those Nations on the other side, who lie advantageously upon the Sea, and abound with good Harbors, Rivers, and Shipping; whose People also are well experienced in the managing of affairs of Traffique, and Navigation; and go generally secure from danger; These have likewise this Advantage further, of beeing able, at their own pleasure, to make themselves such a rich and general Magazine or Store as wee speak of for other Nations:

Which design scarce any People hath ever pursued with such studied Industrie, or made proof of the vast benefits and advantage which comes thereby, to so high a degree, as hath *Holland*. They

They fetching the Commodities of *Russia, Norway, Poland, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, &c.* and bringing them into their own Countries, do laie them up there at pleasure; till by advice weekly from all other parts, they are directed where to finde a Market for them; And accordingly carrie them into *England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Portugal, Streights*, or other places Southward. They on the other side go at fit Seasons to the *Streights, Portugal, France, Spain, West and East-Indies*; and fetching the Commodities of those Southern countries, do usually disperse them again back, into the more Northerly Regions; both into those that belong unto this Common-wealth, and to those others also that wee speak of, placing their whole Interest in the encouragement and sagacious Managerie of this Court and Circle of Traffique.

*Arguments tendred to move this Nation to undertake the like general Mart, as hath the*  
HOLLANDER;

*Drawn,*

*First*, From Expectation of like benefit to us, that our Neighbors have upon this Accompt certainly gained to themselves, seeing this kinde of Trade would effectually conduce

*Both to the increasing, and to the better distributing Riches to this Nation, then by that wee now have;*  
*That is,*

If Ports for Landing and Storing up forreign commodities; and exporting them again upon such easie Duties, as wee may hold the Market in all other countries with our Neighbors the *Hollanders*, may in all the fittest places of this Common-wealth bee opened.

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*Secondly,*

*Secondly*, It would tend as much also to the encreasing the Power and Strength of this Nation, both by Land and by Sea: as well in Guarding and plentifully planting and peopling those Maritime or Frontier-Towns, and the Countries thereabouts, which shall bee appointed and allowed for free Ports; as in multiplying the Shipping of our Countrey. A proof of which wee have already had in *Dover*, which, after the Composition-Trade was settled there (that made it in some kind a free Port) did within Ten years time arise from nothing to have neer two hundred sail of prettie great Shipping; with an Increase of Stock, Houses, and all things answerable, although, having lost it now but neer as long, it is quite decayed in all again.

More particularly, Opening of Free Ports, will conduce to the Quickning of Trade; to the Imploiment of the poor throughout the whole Common-wealth: to the making of all Forreign Commodities more cheap, and more plentiful; seeing every man will bring in, when hee know's hee may (if hee finde no market here) freely carrie it out again. It will likewise serv to the preventing of Famine, and scarcitie of Corn; to the raising the Exchange, and bringing in of Bullion: to the augmenting of the Revenue of the State: and to the making other Nations more dependent upon this.

As a further Inducement to all which, is offered to Consideration the many Advantages that this Commonwealth hath above our Neighbors, the *Hollanders*, (how much soever they have raised themselves by this Art) for the putting in Practice such an universal intercourse of Traffique as is desired.

As

*First*, From the Largeness of this Common-wealth's Dominions, and number of our Ports and Harbors, above those of our Neighbors.

*Secondly*, From the plenty of commoditie wee have from within



within our selves, and from our own Plantations: which alone being now restrained to our own Shipping, will afford a Stock very great to begin with.

*Thirdly*, From the Freedom and Independencie that our Shipping have upon the Ports of any other State, or Nation; and the Sovereignty wee keep and maintain in our own Channel. Whereas it is well known that our Neighbors the *Hollander's* ships, have not onely a great, but a necessarie Relying upon the Ports and Protection of this Common-wealth: Great Fleets of their shipping continually being forced to put in, and for the most part to Winter in our Harbors, wee in the mean time very seldom or rarely bearing into any forreign Port for shelter.

*Fourthly*, From the Privileges many of our Ports have for being fitter Out-lets on any windes, then those of our Neighbors, and better situated for most Trades, either Southerly or Northerly.

*Lastly*, From the Boldness of our Coasts safe and excellent Road-steads; And for being at all seasons free from being frozen in and stopped; Whereas our Neighbors have on the other side, a flat and dangerous Coast, barr'd and inconvenient Harbors; and such as are by reason of Ice, shut up and useles for almost a third or fourth part of the year; which singular Conveniencies or Privileges coming to this Nation so immediately from Providence, are not altogether to be neglected.

*The third Consideration* (although in some regard most principal to be weigh'd) is, the Inconveniencies wee at present lie under from the Trade wee have; and the Damages that will unavoidably grow upon us, if this Trade onely continue;

*For,*

*First*, The trade wee now drive tends, or is onely for Consumption; it being very little of forreign commodities that is re-transported upon the present encouragement,

ment or settled rate of half Custom.

For, though it may bee objected, that look what Tonnage, Subsidie, or Custom is paid upon forreign goods inwards, which are spent in the Nation, is onely disbursed for a while by the Merchant, and at length really accounted for to the immediate Buyer or Spender; and that therefore this Custom inwards, though it should bee great, cannot destroye the Merchant: Yet the case is howeever very different, and altogether otherwise in a Tax or Rate of half that custom set upon all the same unconsumed Goods when carried outwards, specially if there was an Over-valuing (as in many there is) of those Goods inwards.

Seeing although it bee said the other was paid by the Nation (that is the custom inwards,) upon all Goods here spent; yet this custom outwards is solely taken from the purf of the Merchant, and cannot bee re-imbursed to him again in other countries, especially when another forreign Merchant shall carrie the same commoditie thither, and by paying less custom shall afford it cheaper; for then this Tax outward must eat our Merchant up by little and little, and put a discouragement upon him.

*For Example.*

The *Hollander* and wee deal for spice, for Wines, for Sugar, Indico, Silk, Cotton, and for the Manufacture of Spanish VVool: all which (with other Commodities) wee fetch from the places of their Growth, or first Production, in the respective shipping of each Nation; for som of which Commodities our Merchants at coming in pay in Custom, in Impost, and by over-rating the commoditie 10. 15. and in som things neer 20 *per Cent.* which if those Goods were sold here, and spent in the Commonwealth, the Merchant perhaps could not so much feel it (unless in a perishable and uncertain commoditie, where  
hee



hee oft suffer's) for hee then rate's his Goods accordingly when hee sell's them.

But if hee shall desire to transport again those Goods into the East-Lands, into the Streights, or into any other places or countries where hee know's they are wanted: Though of this great custom hee do receiv the one half back again;

Yet if the *Hollanders* shall upon the same Goods paie but 2 per Cent. Custom, they have the Advantage by this means before our Merchant of 5. 6. or 8. per Cent. in their Market (beyond Sea) beeing clean so much loss as to our Merchant, so to the Nation, and to the employment of its Shipping; this kinde of outward Trade beeing by this means at length wholly left off and deserted.

These two wholly differing in kinde one from another; For a Nation to deal or traffique in VVares and Merchandizes for its own expence and consumption, as countrie Gentlemen, or ordinarie Trades-men; And for a Nation to make its self a shop, and to buy and sell for the furnishing and provision of other Nations; as a man that keep's a VVare-hous, or Store-hous; which latter Trade is that wee speak of;

In regard that a Nation that onely buie's and trade's to furnish it self, is confined to a Stock, and such a Stock, as must not exceed its own expence or Consumption: And the Employment of Shipping and Returns of forreign Goods must bee still as confined, and limited answerably; and neither Trade, nor Shipping, nor Stock are at almost able to exceed the value of our Native Commodities exported: For if the Libertie here of the Merchant and People for Trading and buying of Forreign Commodities, should exceed our Exportation, or the value thereof, and not rather bee less then otherwise, it doth but tend more and more to the Loss of our VValth, and to our Decay and Ruine.

Where-

Therefore all Consultations whatsoever about Trade, if *Free Ports* bee not opened, and this *Whole-sale* or *General Trade* bee not incouraged, do still but terminate in some Advice or other about *Regulating* our *Consumption*, and have no other good at farthest, but prevention that our *Balance of Import* exceed not our *Exports*: which to confine our selves to alone, is, on the other side, a Course so short, as it will neither serv to raise the Strength of this Nation in Shipping, or to Govern the Exchange abroad; nor yet to avoid the Damage and Mischief the Subtiltie of the forreign Merchant will hereby bring upon us.

Whereas if *Free Ports* bee opened, and *Exportation* of forreign Goods encouraged; not onely the Mischief of the *Consumption* and carrying out of our *Treasure*; and of *Lowness of Exchange*, will most effectually bee prevented, but both our *Stock* and *Shipping* will bee indefinitely or proportionably increased.

Lastly, A great Part of the *Revenue* of the State is for want of this *general Trade* clearly lost; for supposing *Free Ports* to bee opened, wee must grant there will bee an Access of wealth to the Nation, and an Increase to this *Common-wealth* by *Strangers*.

And consequently, Our *Consumption* of forreign *Commodities* will not bee at all less, but more; and therefore the *Incom* or *Custom* paid upon it. Over and above which, the State may have a *Custom* or *Dutie* in a very short time of one per Cent. upon the value of some Millions of Goods yearly, which now (by Reason of the *Discouragements* aforesaid) are carried into other Parts, and for which they yet receive not one Farthing.

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FINIS.

and Rine.